



State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

Assembly Committee on Education
October 9, 2007

Department of Public Instruction Testimony on 2007 Assembly Bill 404

Thank you to Chairperson Davis and members of the committee. My name is Jennifer Kammerud. I am the legislative liaison for the Department of Public Instruction and am here today to testify in favor of Assembly Bill 404 (AB 404).

The department requested this language change as we needed to clarify that local, state, federal, or other authorized sources of funding may be used to pay advanced placement and International Baccalaureate exam costs for low-income students. The U.S. Department of Education has taken our current statutory language to mean that only state or local funds should pay for these exams. This has prevented the state from receiving federal grants for advanced placement exams. In 2006 the state was denied \$100,000. This year \$140,000 was denied as our statutory language had not changed. The \$140,000 would have paid for at least 1,500 advanced placement exams at the full cost of \$83 per exam and 95 International Baccalaureate exams at the rate of \$120 each for students who are economically disadvantaged.

It is important to expand access to advanced placement courses and tests. For many students the costs of these exams represent a significant barrier to taking the coursework.

The next round of grants will be given out in January. We would like to be eligible for these grants in 2008 and believe that these funds may be available to Wisconsin school districts if this legislation is adopted.

Thank you. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.



SONDY POPE-ROBERTS

STATE REPRESENTATIVE

October 9, 2007

Testimony to Assembly Committee on Education regarding Assembly Bill 404

Thank you for the opportunity to briefly testify today in support of AB 404 and the companion bill SB 249.

Currently, pupils in Wisconsin public school districts who are eligible for free or reduced price lunches can also have the cost of advance placement exams covered by the school board. However, statutes specifically indicate that only *state and local funds* may be used to pay for the cost of these advance placement exams. By adding language that would include *federal or other authorized sources of funding* to pay for these exams, we make it possible to receive federal funds which we have not been previously able to access.

In this age of tightening school budgets, it seems obvious that we must make this technical clarification of the law in order to seek and use funds from federal and private grants as well as other funding programs.